

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

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Preprint

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Footnotes

- ^[1] Required annually except for agencies that are independent commissions do not provide this attachment.
- ^[2] Required only of agencies requesting, or previously granted, a Waiver of Statewideness.
- ^[3] The following attachments should be submitted whenever the information needs to be updated.
- ^[4] The following attachments require annual updating and must be submitted each year.
- ^[5] Required Annually for All Agencies on an Order of Selection

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

Section 1: State Certifications

- 1.1 The (enter the name of designated state agency or designated state unit below)...
Vermont Agency of Human Services
... is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended ^[1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act ^[2].
- 1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the... (enter the name of the designated state agency below) ^[3]
Vermont division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
... agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan ^[4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations ^[5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.
- 1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan ^[6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations ^[7], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan. Yes
- 1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement. Yes
- 1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement. Yes
- 1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law. Yes

- 1.7 The (enter title of state officer below)
Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services
... has the authority under state law to receive, hold and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement. Yes
- 1.8 The (enter title of state officer below) ...
Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services
... has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services. Yes
- 1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. Yes

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/8003/assurancesed80013.doc>) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Signed? | Yes |
| Name of Signatory | Robert Hofmann |
| Title of Signatory | Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services |
| Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) | 06/29/2009 |

The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s) in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY 2010 No

Signed?
Name of Signatory
Title of Signatory
Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)

* The signatory of the assurance with the authority to execute and submit the State Plan will maintain a signed copy of the assurance(s) with the signed State Plan.

Section 1

Footnotes

- [1] Public Law 93 112, as amended by Public Laws 93 516, 95 602, 98 221, 99 506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.
- [2] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
- [3] All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

- [4] No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.
- [5] Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85 and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.
- [6] No funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- [7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

- 2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))
 - (a) Conduct of public meetings.
The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.
 - (b) Notice requirements.
The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council.
 - (c) Special consultation requirements.
The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

- 3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)
 - 0 (a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.
 - 0 (b) The state submits only those policies, procedures or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.
 - 0 (c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the

commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:

1. comprehensive system of personnel development;
2. assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
3. innovation and expansion activities; and
4. other updates of information required under Title I, Part B, or Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act that are requested by the commissioner.

- 0 (d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Rehabilitation Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

- 0 (a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B, of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.
- 0 (b) The Supported Employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(a) Designated state agency.

- (1) There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.
- (2) The designated state agency is:
- | | |
|-----|---|
| No | (A) a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; or |
| Yes | (B) a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section. |
- (3) In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

- (1) If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section, the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division or unit that:
- (A) is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other

rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;

- (B) has a full-time director;
 - (C) has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
 - (D) is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
- (2) The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

No (a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission that:

- (1) is responsible under state law for operating or overseeing the operation of the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
- (2) is consumer controlled by persons who:
 - (A) are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - (B) represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
- (3) includes family members, advocates or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and
- (4) undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).

or

Yes (b) The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit:

- (1) jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to and reviews annually state goals and priorities and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and subsection 4.11 of this State Plan;
- (2) regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;

- (3) includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and
- (4) transmits to the council:
 - (A) all plans, reports and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner;
 - (B) all policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement; and
 - (C) copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.
- (c) If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

- (a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;
- (b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (d) the director of the Client Assistance Program; and
- (e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.

4.4 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state or, if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency.

No

If "Yes", the designated state agency:

- (a) ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the

Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and

- (b) develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with the State Plan.

4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities.

No

If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) a description of the nature and scope of the joint program;
- (b) the services to be provided under the joint program;
- (c) the respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and
- (d) the share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

- (a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.
- (b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:

- (1) nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization or individual;
- (2) services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
- (3) state, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b)(3) a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:

- (A) identification of the types of services to be provided;
- (B) written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
- (C) written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
- (D) written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

- (c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

- (a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide work force investment system.

- (b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

- (1) cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide work force investment system;
- (2) coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3) establishment of cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
- (4) efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

- (1) Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.

(2) The State Plan description must:

- (A) provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and
- (B) include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
 - (i) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to postschool activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (ii) transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education

programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

- (iii) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
- (iv) procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

- (d) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

- (e) Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.

- (1) There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations.

No

- (2) If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act:
 - (A) strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
 - (B) procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (C) provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (b))

- (a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the plan and 34 CFR 361.

- (b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- (c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

(1) Qualified personnel needs.

- (A) The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- (B) The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- (C) Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in five years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

(2) Personnel development.

- (A) A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- (B) The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- (C) The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) Personnel standards.

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

- (1) standards that are consistent with any national- or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that

apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.

- (2) To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the state plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the time lines for taking each step.
- (3) The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:
 - (A) specific strategies for retraining, recruiting and hiring personnel;
 - (B) the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
 - (C) procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
 - (D) the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) Staff development.

Policies, procedures and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

- (1) A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement and rehabilitation technology.
- (2) Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) Personnel to address individual communication needs.

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports. (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

- (1) Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every three years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a council). The

assessment describes:

- (A) the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - (i) individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - (ii) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
 - (iii) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system.
- (B) The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

- (2) For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

- (1) number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan;
- (2) number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
- (3) costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) Goals and priorities.

- (1) Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- (2) The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
- (3) Order of selection.

If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, Attachment 4.11(c)(3):

- (A) shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
- (B) provides a justification for the order; and
- (C) identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

- (4) Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds.

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(d) Strategies.

(1) Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:

- (A) the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;
- (B) outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
- (C) as applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing or improving community rehabilitation programs;
- (D) strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
- (E) strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

(2) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:

- (A) address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
- (B) support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the plan; and
- (C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

(1) The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.

(2) Attachment 4.11(e)(2):

- (A) provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;
- (B) identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
- (C) describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
- (D) assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
- (E) provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

- (a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:
 - (1) development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and
 - (2) support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).
- (b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.
- (c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

- (a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.
- (b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

Section 5: Administration of the Provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

- (a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section

103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services.

Yes

(b) If No:

- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - (A) shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (B) provides a justification for the order of selection; and
 - (C) identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

- (a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.
- (b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:
 - (1) assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
 - (2) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act;
 - (3) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
 - (4) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
 - (5) rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices; and
 - (6) post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.
- (c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:
 - (1) progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
 - (2) an immediate job placement; or

- (3) provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Rehabilitation Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

- (a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, and is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.
- (b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals or, as appropriate, their representatives are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

- (a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:
 - (1) who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
 - (2) whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended

employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.

- (b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for two years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative) to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.
- (c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.
- (d) The individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation and, through signed acknowledgement, attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

- (a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.
- (b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.
- (c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

- (a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.
The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.
- (b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.
Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B, of the

Rehabilitation Act.

- 6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

- 6.3 Quality, scope and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.

- 6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- 6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

- 6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

- 6.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B, of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 7: Financial Administration

- 7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation

Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

- 7.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))
- (a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.
 - (b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B, are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.
 - (c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 8: Provision of Supported Employment Services

- 8.1 Scope of supported employment services. (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))
- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).
 - (b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.
 - (c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- 8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))
- The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
- 8.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))
- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.
 - (b) The individualized plan for employment:
 - (1) specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
 - (2) describes the expected extended services needed; and
 - (3) identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement

describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

- (c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

Attachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated state unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

Attachment 4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejections of Input or Recommendations.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SRC

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended in 1992, 1993 and in 1998, provides for a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to provide citizen input in partnership with the VT Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

The 1998 amendments provide duties and responsibilities for the SRC. The SRC is to work in partnership with the State Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI). What has worked best in Vermont is that all the organizations providing services to the blind and visually impaired; such as the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the American Council of the Blind (VT chapter), the National Federation of the Blind (VT chapter), Blind Artisans of Vermont and the Special Services Libraries

of the State of Vermont, communicate and share information. What we are working towards is improving the number of quality employment and career opportunities for our client/consumers and assisting them in improving their quality of life.

DBVI RESPONSE

This year the SRC made no specific recommendations to DBVI beyond what is discussed below.

At the SRC's request DBVI held a combined meeting of DBVI staff and the SRC to go over the goals and priorities developed in the last year by DBVI during the statewide assessment. Changes and modifications were made at the request of the SRC, almost all suggestions were accepted and inserted into the goals.

DBVI is appreciative of the support and feedback from all the other organizations that serve individuals in this state who are blind and visually impaired. DBVI looks forward to future collaboration with the SRC and other organizations to bring the best possible services to Vermont.

DBVI is very excited about the summer youth employment program, LEAP, which is probably unique in the country for the type of collaboration involved. Last summer the program expanded to serve 10 individuals, up from the 6 served in last year's inaugural session and involved both an in town and a wilderness session.

DBVI found the first "town meeting" to be successful and productive and with the SRC's support continues to have at least one a year in each region. DBVI will take what worked in the first meeting and combined that with the individual region's resources to create a unique "town meeting" for each region.

DBVI launched a survey at closure of each consumer during the summer of 08 at the request of the SRC and it continues to this day. In this way DBVI and the SRC can keep a constant eye on the program's strengths and areas that need change.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:47AM by Scott Langley

Screen 4 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009) Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

Identify the types of services to be provided by the program for which the waiver of statewideness is requested.

The waiver request should also include:

- a written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the designated state unit the non-federal share of funds;
- a written assurance that designated state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect;
- a written assurance that all state plan requirements will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

No waiver requested

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:47AM by Scott Langley

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**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -
Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010
(submitted FY 2009)
Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with
Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide
Workforce Investment System**

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

At this time DBVI has no cooperative agreements with agencies of this description.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 1:49PM by Scott Langley

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**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program**

and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -
Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010
(submitted FY 2009)
Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education
Officials

- Describe the designated state unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.
- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to
 - consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
 - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
 - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
 - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

DBVI works closely with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired to serve youth in transition in the school system. VABVI uses state education funding to provide the services on a school by school basis. VABVI keeps DBVI abreast of individual student progress and is a part of assisting DBVI as each student creates an IPE by age 16. VABVI is aware of all students who are blind or visually impaired and in school. In this way DBVI is assured of being aware of all eligible individuals and is able to create an IPE at age 16 or at least before they leave school. If DBVI is not able to sit in on an IEP the VABVI teacher gives updates. This year DBVI entered into an agreement with the General Voc Rehab agency to make use of their statewide system of in-school Transition Counselors. Transition Counselors will not provide intensive services in most cases (services provided by the DBVI Counselor) but can sit in on the occasional IEP meeting, act as a liaison to the school, keep DBVI counselor abreast of school and regional resources and be there as a possible resource for students. DBVI's transition caseload is small and it was thought there could be better statewide coverage this way versus contracting for a single, part-time coordinator. DBVI counselors check in as part of the Core Transition Teams made up of education staff and community/adult agency representatives. DBVI counselor have regular check ins with the Transition Counselor in their area. DBVI is also fortunate to have two DOE representatives (both in the special education area) attending SRC meetings, allowing good contact and information exchange.

Interagency Agreement with

Vermont Department of Education and
Vermont Agency of Human Services
Pursuant to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
June 2005

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PURPOSE

This agreement promotes collaboration between the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and the Department of Education (DOE) in order to ensure that all required services are coordinated and provided to students with disabilities, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and policies. As required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the agreement delineates the provision and funding of services required by federal or state law or assigned by state policy. The areas covered by this agreement include coordination of services, agency financial responsibility, conditions and terms of reimbursement, and resolution of interagency disputes.

This interagency agreement outlines the provision of services to students who are eligible for both special education and services provided by AHS and its member departments and offices including Department of Health (VDH), Department for Children and Families (DCF), Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Office of Vermont Health Access (OVHA). It is intended that the agreement will provide guidance to human services staff and school personnel in the coordination and provision of services for students with disabilities.

MISSION/GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The DOE, the local education agencies (LEA) and AHS work together to assure that children and youth with disabilities, ages 3-22, receive services for which they are eligible in a timely and coordinated manner. Ultimate responsibility to ensure a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities lies with DOE and responsibility to provide a FAPE lies with the LEA. AHS is responsible for supporting students and their families toward successful outcomes in their broader functioning consistent with federal law including 32 CFR §300.1421 as well as state law. These agencies will work together to assure the needs of eligible students with disabilities are met, services are coordinated and integrated, funds are efficiently used, and a dispute resolution process is in place to resolve interagency policy and funding disputes when a conflict occurs.

In recognition of the importance of providing a smooth transition from education to adult life, transition services for eligible students will be community-driven, involve a comprehensive system including AHS, DOE, employers, the workforce system and youth and their families. These services will be provided with the intent to increase the number of youth with disabilities entering employment, further education, and independent or supported living.

1 All statutory and regulatory citations in this agreement are to those in effect at the date of execution of the agreement and as amended thereafter from time to time. The statutory and regulatory citations in this agreement will be updated to reflect the IDEA of 2005 and its implementing regulations.

AREAS OF AGREEMENT

I. COORDINATION OF SERVICES

A. General

The Department of Education and the Agency of Human Services and its member departments are committed to assuring that students with disabilities, ages 3-22, receive integrated services which allow them to receive a free and appropriate education and to grow and develop and reach their goals. The intent of this section is to extend, by agreement and by procedure, the provisions of 33 V.S.A. §§ 4301-4303 and 4305, to all children and youth who meet eligibility requirements under IDEA, who also are eligible for disability-related service delivery and coordination by at least one AHS department.

1. Coordinated Services Plan

Eligible children and youth are entitled to receive a coordinated services plan developed by a service coordination team including representatives of education, the appropriate departments of the Agency of Human Services, the parents or guardians, and natural supports connected to the family. The coordinated services plan includes the Individual Education Plans (IEP) as well as human services treatment plans or individual plans of support, and is organized to assure that all components are working toward compatible goals, progress is monitored, and resources are being used effectively to achieve the desired result for the child and family. Funding for each element of the plan is identified.

Special consideration needs to be given to transition-age youth. Specific transition planning must begin at the age required by federal and state law.

(See page 4 for definition of transition services.) The LEA is responsible for identifying each child or youth in need of a transition plan and arranging for appropriate team meetings. Also, the LEAs will collaborate with AHS on the annual survey which identifies students who will be graduating and may be in need of long-term supports.

Each child or youth and family has a lead service coordinator who assures that the plan is regularly reviewed and serves as the agreed upon contact person if the coordinated services plan needs to be adjusted.

If a team has not been formed or is not functioning, if a coordinated services plan is not satisfactory, if there is no lead service coordinator, or if a plan is not being implemented satisfactorily, the family or individual or another involved party may request a meeting of the Local Interagency Team (see below) to address the situation.

When a team believes that a child or youth requires highly intensive services in residential care or intensive wrap-around services, the plan

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shall be reviewed and approved by the Case Review Committee (see below), except as otherwise required by federal or state law.

2. Infrastructure

a. State Interagency Team

The DOE and the AHS commit to the existence and ongoing support of a State Interagency Team (SIT). The SIT includes a high level manager from the following departments and divisions within state government: DOE, Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Disabilities and Aging Services (DDAS), Division of Family Services (DFS), Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and AHS Field Services as well as other units as determined by the Secretary of AHS. A family consumer representative will also be a core member of the SIT. The SIT is responsible for overseeing the development and maintenance of the system of care to address the needs of children with eligible disabilities, for assuring the consistent development of coordinated services plans, and to be part of the dispute resolution process outlined

below.

b. Local Interagency Team

The DOE and the AHS commit to the existence and support of a system of Local Interagency Teams (LIT) in each of the 12 AHS regions in Vermont. Each LIT includes a special education director selected by the districts in that region, the local children's mental health director, the Family Services director, a family consumer representative, high level local leaders from developmental services and substance abuse, and a VR representative. Other AHS programs are represented as needed. The LIT supports the creation of a local system of care and assures that staff are trained and supported in creating coordinated services plans. They also play a role in dispute resolution as outlined below. The AHS Field Director and a designated DOE staff person assure that the region has a highly functional team and is responsible for working with the team to solve funding issues. The Field Director is the key conduit to a High Risk Fund, managed through the Field Services Division.

LITs will assure that there is a structure to focus on the particular needs of transition-age youth to support transition from school to adult life. Adult agency providers would be included as needed including high level local leaders from adult mental health programs (CRT) and the Department of Employment and Training (DET).

Likewise, special attention must be taken to assure an appropriate process to address the needs of children ages 3 to 6. Such a process must include the Child Development Division.

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c. Case Review Committee (CRC)

The SIT shall establish a Case Review Committee that will include representatives of the Family Services Division, DMH, DDAS, DOE, and a parent representative. Other units of AHS will be included as appropriate. The CRC meets regularly to review the recommendations of service coordination teams for intensive services including residential care and high- level wrap-around services. The purpose of the review is to determine if a child's needs require the proposed level of service. The CRC serves both as a control to assure the appropriateness of high cost placements in the least restrictive environment, and also as a consulting body for local teams, helping identify appropriate services and approaches for eligible children and youth with the highest level of need.

B. VR Transition Service Coordination for Students with Disabilities in Vermont's High Schools

1. VR Services for Students with Disabilities

VR is committed to the successful transition of young adults with disabilities from school to work or further education or training. VR is required under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, see 29 U.S.C. §720 et seq. and pertinent federal regulation, see 34 CFR §361.22; the IDEA, and pertinent federal regulation, see 34 CFR §§300.347 (b) and 300.348; and the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, see 29 U.S.C. §3001 et seq., to coordinate policies and procedures with education officials that facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the VR agency.

Transition services are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that (a) is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary

education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; b) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and (c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

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2. Early Identification and Follow-Along

A VR staff member will maintain at least annual contact with school personnel in each area school to ensure early identification of students in special education who may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. This early identification occurs at the age required by federal and state law and includes formal VR involvement in IEP/Transition Team meetings. VR will provide brochures to schools to be shared with students with disabilities and their families. Additionally, local Core Transition Teams will provide the VR Counselor with a forum to discuss projections of numbers of students who will need transition services from VR. Outreach activities by VR, such as visits with guidance counselors, will include ways to identify out-of-school youth and students at risk for dropping out of school. Outreach activities may also include meeting with families and students at their homes (or other settings at the choice of families and students).

The VR Counselor's role in this early identification is primarily counseling, guidance and assistance during the IEP/transition planning process. The Counselor may assist the individual, family members, and school transition team members in long-term planning for adult life. This planning may focus on post-secondary education, a job, a place to live after graduation and participation in the community.

Although VR's primary focus is to assist with vocational preparation, VR staff also serves as a resource for area schools regarding local community services and long-term supports.

3. Referrals to VR

Consultation should intensify when a student is four years from graduation. VR should initiate formal intake at least 18 months before the student is scheduled to graduate or exit from high school. Students at risk for dropping out or students with complex needs may be considered for earlier intake.

VR will not serve persons under age 18 without the permission of a parent, guardian, or legal representative unless they are emancipated.

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Services may include counseling and consultation around the development of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) that is coordinated with the IEP. Services also may include assessment, job development, training and other paid services.

The IPE must be developed and written before the student leaves school.

4. Purchased Services

The VR Counselor shall make the IEP/Transition Team aware of the scope of VR services available, including financial assistance for post-secondary education.

As determined on an individual basis, VR may provide for assistive technology, (AT), services and devices for a VR-eligible student within 12 months of exiting school. The AT services must meet the following criteria: a) they are part of an IEP with coordinated transition goals, b) they are part of an approved IPE, and c) they are necessary to accomplish a successful transition to employment, post-secondary education or training.

During the student's Transition Year (nine months before exiting school), VR may support Employment Specialist services on a job site, which is expected to continue post-graduation. VR may pay for an Employment Specialist for up to twelve (12) months if ongoing supports have been negotiated with a long-term services provider (e.g., mental health agency, DDAS, private provider, or through the use of natural supports). As determined by the Counselor and the VR Regional Manager, services may be provided prior to the last year in school if essential to the IPE goals and/or their development and there are no other funding options. As determined by the Counselor and the VR Regional Manager, other time-limited services may be purchased consistent with the comparable services and benefits requirement of 34 CFR §361.53. Examples include on-site job assessments, driver education evaluations or physical restoration services.

5. VR Transition Counselors

VR Transition Specialty Counselors work with many high schools in Vermont. At least one counselor is based on-site, serving one of the largest high schools in the state and the remaining counselors are on-site in schools multiple times per month. General VR Counselors serve adults as well as young adults in transition in the remaining high schools. VR school counselors who exclusively serve youth in transition provide a higher level of service and offer a higher level of expertise on transition issues and requirements.

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6. Bridges to Self Sufficiency □ Youth Benefits Counseling Program

It is often the accepted wisdom of high school special education staff, transition professionals and family members that youth with disabilities put their cash benefits and healthcare at risk by working. What is generally not well understood, is that there are some excellent work incentives built into these public benefit programs for youth who want to work and attend post-secondary education.

The Bridges Project makes benefits planning and other assistance available to every student with a disability of transition age in Vermont and provides accurate information to youth and their families on the impact of employment on all the federal and state benefits they receive. Benefits Counselors, located in each of the AHS district offices, are in the schools in their district on a regular basis, work with Special Education staff and attend transition planning/IEP meetings at the request of the student, family or school personnel. They conduct training for educators, students and families on benefits and work incentives. About half of Vermont's high schools routinely use the benefits counselors' expertise to assist students and their families. Benefits Counselors receive referrals from VR, community mental health agencies, community developmental services agencies, family services agencies, consumer advocates and families.

7. JOBS Program

The JOBS Program offers vocational services and intensive case management to high-risk youth with emotional behavioral disabilities in 11 of 12 AHS districts through a partnership between VR and the Division of Mental Health, the Division of Family Services and the Department of Corrections. The program serves high school drop-outs and those at high risk of dropping out and engages youth in non-stigmatizing employment services while providing a bridge to more intensive mental health and case management services.

8. Vermont Assistive Technology (AT) Project

The AT Project provides services to schools and students through the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 and through a formula grant from the Vermont DOE. Two certified staff provide the following AT services

across the state as requested by school personnel: a) assistive technology evaluations, consultation and technical assistance to children with disabilities, enrolled in public schools; b) additional children's AT services are provided on a case-by-case basis, depending on level and need and intervention required; c) outreach, information and referral and tryout of equipment; and d) training and technical assistance to students, educators, other service providers and family members as teams.

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II. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

A. General Statement

The Vermont DOE and AHS are committed to meeting financial responsibilities as required by law. The secretary of AHS and the commissioner of DOE will periodically review the financial responsibilities enumerated below, identify areas for improved programmatic and financial efficiencies, and develop strategies to meet financial responsibilities, including joint appropriations requests from the state legislature and negotiations with federal agencies.

1. Specific Funding Provisions for State-placed Students

In the circumstances listed below, financial responsibility for services otherwise considered special education and related services shall be as set forth in federal law, Vermont law, and/or existing memorandum of understanding as described below:

a) Services provided to state-placed students in residential facilities with approved schools or tutorial program, as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 11(28), with payment as described:

i. DCF, Family Services □ Pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 2950(b)(1) and 33 V.S.A. § 310, when a child is in the custody of the DCF, and DCF has agreed to the child's placement in a 24-hour residential facility with an approved educational program, the Commissioner of Education shall pay the education costs and the Commissioner of DCF shall arrange for the payment of the remainder of the costs. Except for short-term emergency or evaluation placements, prior approval of payment must be provided by authorized representatives of DCF and DOE for its respective portions.

ii. VDH, DMH, Child, Adolescent and Family Unit □ Pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 2950(b)(2), when a child is placed in a 24-hour residential facility by a designated community mental health agency and that placement has been approved by the Division, the Commissioner of DOE shall pay the education costs and DMH shall arrange for payment of the remainder of the costs. Except for short-term emergency or evaluation placements, prior approval of payment must be provided by authorized representatives of DMH and DOE for its respective portions.

iii. VDH, ADAP □ For individuals placed by a licensed alcohol and drug counselor of a designated community mental health agency or substance abuse agency in an approved 24-hour residential substance abuse treatment facility located within Vermont, and who meet the DSM-IV criteria or its successor for substance abuse/dependence and the American Society of Addiction

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Medicine Level III criteria for residential treatment, DOE will pay for both general and special education tutorial services; ADAP, or its sub-grantee will pay for treatment, room and board. (Note: Substance abuse is not an IDEA-covered disability; this provision pertains to students otherwise IDEA-eligible who enter a substance abuse treatment residential program.)

b) Services provided to children residing in their homes and communities with payment as described:

i. DAIL, DDAS □ DAIL, DDAS, serves children with developmental

disabilities as defined in 18 V.S.A. §8722 and provides services pursuant to 18 V.S.A. §8725. DAIL, DDAS, pays for the developmental home or shared parenting placement for children who:

(a) are under 18 years of age and □grandfathered, following a regulatory change in 2001, and

(b) are at risk of entering a psychiatric institution and in which case, DAIL pays the state share.

In these instances where the child is receiving educational services in a district other than the district of the parent□s residence, the costs for those services will be paid by the DOE pursuant to VSBE Rule 2366.7.2(1).

Prior approval of payment must be provided by authorized representatives of DAIL for its respective portion.

ii. VDH, DMH, Child, Adolescent and Family Unit

Local community mental health agencies provide mental health supports to children who would benefit from such services within available resources. Community mental health agencies receive funding on an annual basis from the DMH which pays for a portion of the costs associated with the provision of care to children with mental health disabilities. Depending on the type of service, the community mental health agency may fund the appropriate and necessary mental health services; to the extent that such services may also be considered □related services□ pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.24, such services shall be provided consistent with 34 C.F.R. §300.142(b)(ii).

iii. VDH, Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) program

Eligible children who meet program requirements may receive medically necessary services provided at the CSHN Clinic consistent with 42 U.S.C. § 1396b(c). Upon enrollment in CSHN, a CSHN team evaluates the child and issues a report that is sent to the child□s family who in turn may send the report to the child□s

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school. The report may also be used at the LIT and SIT meetings.

Pursuant to Vt. Code Rules 13 140 CVR 048, Cost-Share for Patients of AHS/VDH/CSHN Programs, all families with children enrolled in the CSHN program are subject to cost sharing, as specified in the rule. For any service specified in an IEP, the school district may not require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim for services specified in an IEP pursuant to 34 C.F.R. 300.142(e) and (g)(2).

a) Vocational Rehabilitation - For eligible students, VR will pay for services to the extent that funds are available at the time the services are needed, including assistive technology services and devices, that are identified in an approved IPE in keeping with VR□s order of selection for services that:

i. are consistent with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and implementing regulations including but not limited to 34 C.F.R. §361.53; the IDEA, including but not limited to 34 C.F.R. §§300.5, 300.6, 300.347(b), and 300.348; the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, PL 108-364; and Vermont State Plan; and

ii. promote or facilitate the accomplishment of vocational rehabilitation goals and any intermediate rehabilitation objectives identified in the student□s IPE to ensure the student□s successful transition to employment, post-secondary education, or training within 12 months of the student□s exit from school.

b) Medicaid □ School-based Program □ Financial responsibility for the

School-based Medicaid program will be consistent with the
□ Interagency Agreement between AHS and DOE for School-Based Health Services □ of November 2004 or any subsequent agreements replacing it. Pursuant to the IDEA, related services do not include services that must be performed by a physician, other than services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes.

c) Medicaid □ OVHA □ OVHA will pay for Medicaid-covered services to eligible individuals consistent with 42 U.S.C. §1396b(c) of the Public Health and Welfare law, and 34 C.F.R. §300.142(b)(1)(ii) of the IDEA. However, for the purposes of a 42 U.S.C. §1396n waiver, □ habilitation services □ shall not include special education and related services. For any service specified in an IEP, the school district may not require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim
2 Order of selection does not consider whether a student is on an IEP or not.
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for services specified in an IEP pursuant to 34 C.F.R. 300.142(e) and (g)(2). Pursuant to the IDEA, related services do not include services that must be performed by a physician, other than services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes.

d) Community High School of Vermont (CHSVT), DOC □ For students enrolled in CHSVT, the Department of Corrections □ and the DOE □s financial responsibility shall be assigned in accordance with 28 V.S.A. §120 and other relevant state and federal laws. A separate memorandum of understanding for CHSVT will be developed and signed by the commissioners of corrections and education to be incorporated into this agreement.

e) Woodside □ For students who are in DCF custody and placed at the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, DCF will pay for all costs of treatment, room and board, and education, including services required in an IEP, as required by 16 V.S.A. § 2948(n).

2. Other Funding Obligations

For all other services that may be considered special education and related services, financial responsibility will be assigned consistent with federal law including 34 C.F.R. § 300.142, state law and the following understanding:

a) DOE shall be responsible to ensure a FAPE to students with disabilities and LEAs shall be responsible to provide a FAPE.
b) The DOE will work with LEAs to maximize receipt of federal Medicaid dollars available for reimbursement of medically related services provided to Medicaid-eligible students.

c) The DOE will identify best practices concerning cost containment and the provision of FAPE consistent with 16 V.S.A. §2959b. DOE will provide technical assistance in this area to LEAs.

d) The IDEA does not limit the responsibility of non-educational agencies from providing or paying for some or all of the costs of FAPE to children with disabilities. However, this shall not be construed to expand or otherwise alter state and/or federal law requirements imposed on any non-education agency.

3. Conditions and Terms of Reimbursement

If a non-educational agency fails to provide or pay for services for which they are responsible and which are also considered special education and related services, the LEA (or state agency responsible for developing the child □s IEP) shall provide or pay for these services to the child in a timely manner. The LEA or state agency may then claim reimbursement for the services from the non-educational agency that was responsible for the provision of the services and failed to provide or pay for these services and that agency shall reimburse the LEA or state agency in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

Pursuant to this provision, the AHS and DOE will develop joint procedures for reimbursement.

III. DISPUTE RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

Where the LIT is unable to resolve any of the issues pursuant to this agreement, a referral may be made to the SIT for resolution.

Where the SIT is unable to resolve a dispute among the various agencies, it shall inform all participating parties of the right to an appeal process. The Secretary of AHS and Commissioner of DOE may resolve the issues and render a written decision or may arrange for a hearing pursuant to Chapter 25 of Title 3.

If a hearing is held, it shall be conducted by a hearing officer appointed by the Secretary of the AHS and the Commissioner of Education. The Secretary and the Commissioner may affirm, reverse, or modify the proposals of the hearing officer.

Nothing in this agreement shall be construed to limit any existing substantive or procedural protections of state or federal law or regulations.

IV. QUARTERLY REVIEW

The Commissioner of DOE and the Secretary of AHS or their designees will meet at least quarterly to review existing data and evaluate the implementation of this agreement in order to improve the results for eligible children with disabilities and the operations of local and regional teams of educators and human services providers. Local and/or state teams may be asked to assist state agencies through provision of data on coordinated services plans and financial resources. The input of parents and other stakeholders may be solicited and considered. DOE and AHS will develop a plan for coordinated data sharing. This evaluation will be used to improve policies, procedures and planning and development activities.

V. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The parties shall comply with all applicable state and federal non-discrimination laws and regulations including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Vermont's Public Accommodations Act.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR MODIFICATIONS

Any provision in this agreement may be rendered null and void by changes in federal or state law that prevent either or both parties from fulfilling the terms of the agreement. If this circumstance should arise, each party agrees to notify the other as soon as reasonably possible.

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During the term of the agreement, either party that is a signatory to this agreement may submit a written request to amend or modify this memorandum. When such a request is made, the parties shall meet without unnecessary delay to consider the proposed amendment.

VII. TERM

This agreement in its present form or as modified shall be effective as of the date of signing and shall remain in effect for five years. The agreement shall be reviewed annually by the parties and may be extended by the mutual written agreement of the parties. Prior to the expiration of the agreement the parties shall meet to negotiate and execute a successor agreement. In the event a successor agreement is not in place when this agreement is due to expire, this agreement will remain in effect until a successor agreement is concluded.

Michael Smith, Secretary Richard H. Cate, Commissioner
Agency of Human Services Department of Education

Date _____ Date _____

Approved as to Form:

Assistant Attorney General

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:23PM by Scott Langley

**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -
Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010
(submitted FY 2009)**

**Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with
Private Nonprofit Organizations**

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

DBVI maintains agreements and contracts with two non-profit organizations and CRPs in particular. VABVI provides direct teaching and rehabilitation training to Vermonters who are visually impaired. They are the only other organization in Vermont providing services to the blind. Due to the close working nature and cooperation there are no duplication of services. DBVI also works closely with VABIR to provide job development and soft skills training for consumers.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:01PM by Scott Langley

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**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -
Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010
(submitted FY 2009)**

**Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative
Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment
Services**

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and

- extended services.

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

The VT DBVI chooses to send the majority of its funding (\$30,000 of \$36,000) for supported employment to support the system of the General VR Supported Employment coordinator. In this fashion DBVI has access to all the agreements for Supported Employment services agreed to by VR, such as agreements with the Division of Disability and Aging Services, TBI services, the Division for Mental Health and the local CRTs.

Because of its small size and the fact that it serves a low incidence population DBVI feels that it can serve the few individuals seeking supported employment best in the above manner. Most individuals who qualify for supported employment and are visually are served by other agencies as their primary disability has identified as other than vision impairment. The small pot of dollars that DBVI does keep can be used to support job coaches and similar services in the rare cases that are on DBVI's caseload.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 12:02PM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

1. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:
 - the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
 - the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
 - projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development.

The Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) operates in the Department of Aging and Independent Living in the Agency of Human Services. DBVI has a staff of 13 full-time employees to cover the state of Vermont. They operate out of four regional offices (Burlington, Montpelier, Rutland, and Springfield) and a central office in Waterbury. DBVI also utilizes the services of a contracted .5 FTE transition coordinator and two contracted .5 FTE job developers

In FFY 2008 DBVI Counselors served an average of 100 consumers annually, with FFY 2009 over half- complete it appears that DBVI will serve a similar average of consumers annually per Counselor. Counselors have an average caseload of about 70 consumers at any given time. Interestingly there has been a geographical shift in caseload size. In the recent past it has always been the Burlington region with the largest caseloads, this year it is Rutland with a caseload of 80 at any one time, with the rest all averaging about 60 on the Counselor's caseload.

The growth in applications and referrals has seems to be increasing slightly, after a small downturn, it is believed that these staffing levels are sufficient to meet needs for the next few years, but DBVI does have concern as caseloads should grow. This is based on the large group of "Baby Boomers" who are now approaching their 60's, when eye disease becomes more prevalent and the expectation that this group will continue to stay in employment longer. Four Rehabilitation Counselors, four Rehabilitation Associates and one Blind Services Assistive Technology Specialist (significant services are also provided by a contracted Rehabilitation Technology consultant, one contracted job developer and a contracted Transition Coordinator) can continue to provide the level of service that Vermonters with vision impairments have come to expect, only if there is no significant growth. Given that DBVI now has increased the number of job developers to 2 at .5 FTE each. DBVI is also exploring how to provide similar job development support in our Rutland region.

Given years of service and age factors DBVI expects that it will lose at least one counselors to retirement in the next four years. There is no expectation of difficulty in recruiting and replacing these individuals given the small number and the ability to anticipate the retirements with accuracy. If rates grow in consumer applications DBVI could anticipate the need of another counselor in the foreseeable future. To that end DBVI would look to work closely with the SRC to create a new position slot for this anticipated need. However, given changing times in the total Vermont state government employment picture any future position requests would not be granted easily. DBVI also anticipates that a new automated case-management system will increase both the ability of Counselors to manage growing caseloads, and the ability of Rehabilitation Associates to support them (new system has progressed to the development stages). DBVI also anticipates the retirement of one Rehabilitation Associate within the next 5 years. A plan to hire Rehabilitation Associates who were interested in becoming Rehabilitation Counselor's has proved to be problematic as a small agency such as DBVI cannot always have openings that coincide with the staff's educational progress. RA's who are qualified to step into a Counselor role are required to move to another organization in order to move up the career ladder. Despite this inability to promote from within, as would be preferable, DBVI feels that it can effectively hire new Counselor's through recruitment.

The Region I Regional Continuing Education Program (RCEP) at Assumption College has provided ongoing training and educational opportunities for all staff. With the national change from RCEPs to TACEs and the combining of the public VR training program with CRP training program into a single TACE DBVI is somewhat dubious about the continuing education that will be provided. In the past DBVI worked closely with Vermont general VR and the Assumption RCEP to bring meaningful training to the state, relevant to all types of Rehabilitation Counselors. DBVI expects to be able to avail itself of its continuing relationship with the general VR program to help create appropriate continuing education

opportunities. It is in the area of specific blind services training that DBVI finds a gap. The New England regional Blind Services conference had already been reduced from every year to every other year under the old RCEP system. Funding has been found to have a Blind Services Conference this year. It has also become extremely difficult for DBVI staff to travel out-of-state to attend any training and almost any training in low vision and blindness is offered outside the borders of Vermont. To this end DBVI will look to cooperate more frequently with its in state not-for-profit partner (VABVI) and its neighboring VR blind services program in NH to create useful and informative continuing education opportunities for staff.

DBVI has four Counselors, one in each regional office, who are CRC eligible (state standard). To maintain training and skill levels, DBVI constantly seeks and distributes information and training opportunities for staff at the regional and national level. The current employment pool is monitored by DBVI through journals, Internet sites and information gathered at conferences and trainings. DBVI also maintains close contact with the program at Assumption College to be aware of new graduates. The state of Vermont remains without a rehabilitation training program at the graduate level and as Assumption College is winding down its cohorts of already employed staff who need CRC eligibility, it will become increasingly difficult to offer training to staff that need to continue to work. On-line and distance learning will become more and more important. DBVI will continue to work with Assumption College to monitor the availability of prospective counselors training in their program, while also seeking alternatives, such as the Springfield College Community Psychology program. Since DBVI has only 4 FTE Counselor positions it is relatively easy to assess the future needs for recruitment for this position, thus a complex database of regional Rehab Counseling programs is not necessary. DBVI is aware of, and keeps track of the regional programs should the need arise to recruit.

University of Southern Maine- 35 matriculated students in program, graduated 10 in 2009.
 Assumption College- graduated 43 in 2008, 30 (15 new anticipated in fall) matriculated students in standard program, 11 in on-line program (15-20 new anticipated in fall).

| Job Title | Total positions | Current vacancies | Projected vacancies over the next 5 years |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---|
| Director | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Chief of Field Services | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Certified Rehabilitation Counselors | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Rehabilitation Associates | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Administrative Assistant | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Assistive Technology Trainer | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| BEP/Randolph-Sheppard Specialist | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

2. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:
 - a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
 - the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

- the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

There are no institutions in Vermont providing vocational rehabilitation training.

DBVI has four Counselors, one in each regional office, who are CRC eligible (state standard). To maintain training and skill levels, DBVI constantly seeks and distributes information and training opportunities for staff at the regional and national level. The current employment pool is monitored by DBVI through journals, Internet sites and information gathered at conferences and trainings. DBVI also maintains close contact with the program at Assumption College to be aware of new graduates. The state of Vermont remains without a rehabilitation training program at the graduate level and as Assumption College is winding down its cohorts of already employed staff who need CRC eligibility, it will become increasingly difficult to offer training to staff that need to continue to work. On-line and distance learning will become more and more important. DBVI will continue to work with Assumption College to monitor the availability of prospective counselors training in their program, while also seeking alternatives, such as the Springfield College Community Psychology program. Since DBVI has only 4 FTE Counselor positions it is relatively easy to assess the future needs for recruitment for this position, thus a complex database of regional Rehab Counseling programs is not necessary. DBVI is aware of, and keeps track of the regional programs should the need arise to recruit.

University of Southern Maine- 35 matriculated students in program, graduated 10 in 2009.
 Assumption College- graduated 43 in 2008, 30 (15 new anticipated in fall) matriculated students in standard program, 11 in on-line program (15-20 new anticipated in fall).

| Institutions | Students enrolled | Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA | Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA | Graduates from the previous year |
|--------------|-------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| 0 | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the Coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

Recruitment and Retention: The small size and stability of the staff means that DBVI is not constantly recruiting new staff. DBVI constantly checks its caseload for interested and appropriately skilled individuals to provide services to Vermonters with vision impairments. Rehabilitation Associates are recruited with a strong preference given to those with Bachelor's degrees and a strong commitment to blind services. Through flexible work schedules and approved time-off DBVI makes it as convenient as possible to pursue degrees and education. Being a small, stable organization DBVI has found it very

difficult, as discussed above, to be in a position to promote staff from within when their educational efforts have made them qualified for promotions. DBVI has lost valuable staff due to the inability to provide promotional opportunity. DBVI will continue to support staff members who want to further their relevant education, as this education can benefit the whole staff through projects and shared information. DBVI also believes that there is benefit derived for all when a new counselor starts providing services to individuals with disabilities, even if it is not immediately and directly at DBVI. Projects and fieldwork are often done within the context of the individual's job or a suitable schedule is arranged. DBVI attempts to support the staff and its professional development through public recognition and monetary awards, when appropriate. When openings do occur DBVI encourages the applications of individuals from minority backgrounds and from those who may have disabilities. A DBVI staff member has been involved on a New England regional committee to recruit new rehabilitation staff and to promote the field in general. Assumption College has recently added an on-line Masters in Rehabilitation counseling program, making it even more convenient for staff to meet CRC eligibility requirements.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

Personnel Standards: DBVI maintains a standard of "CRC" eligibility for its Counselors (Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and internship or Master's in Counseling plus coursework in four core areas and supervised employment experience or Master's in related field plus 18 hours in specified rehabilitation coursework). All efforts are made to hire new Counselors into this standard. When this is not possible, new hires are required, by written agreement, to attain the standard in a reasonable amount of time. The availability of on-line course work should allow any new hires to reasonably take the four "core" courses or any other course work they would need to reach this standard.

DBVI has a standard of Bachelor's degree for new Rehabilitation Associates. This standard lays the groundwork for moving Associates into graduate programs, helping to assure DBVI of maintaining qualified staff (see above discussions of some of the difficulties this can cause).

DBVI allows for a flexible working schedule, makes training assistance available, supports state, regional and national learning options and is strongly supportive of the time, effort, and commitment expended by each staff member to attain educational standards.

DBVI encourages the use of training funds for staff to use to attain and maintain professional standards and to maintain and enhance their professional capabilities.

With a small staff that includes four Rehabilitation Counselors, when fully staffed, DBVI can easily assess training and staff development needs. At this time DBVI is fully staffed with four counselors meeting the state standard of CRC eligibility.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

Staff Development: The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) approved DBVI's comprehensive plan for staff development in January of 1999. This plan outlines DBVI's intent to comply with federal regulations and its professional development objectives.

Through needs assessments, staff input and advice from the SRC, the Training Coordinator develops programs, funded through the five year Training Grant that meet staff development needs. The current Training Grant began in October of 2005 and has the following objectives.

Objective 1: A staff development plan that will enhance job skills, job satisfaction and the development of job opportunities for Vermonters with impaired vision.

Objective 2: A commitment to informed consumer choice

Objective 3: Collaboration with other agencies, especially the Division for Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Impaired

Objective 4: Cultural Diversity outreach to underserved populations and increased access to services by all eligible individuals.

Objective 5: Increase the use of distance education

The above objectives underlain by the following principles will allow DBVI staff to provide consistent statewide services to Vermonters with impaired vision.

-Informed Consumer Choice- offering consumers resources and information so that they may direct their vocational rehabilitation plan

-Early Intervention- by offering individuals services and adjustment counseling at an early phase success rates are higher

-Counselor autonomy- allowing these professionals to have lots of local decision-making power allows for a much faster process.

DBVI staff receives ongoing training through local and regional conference attendance, in-state workshops (ethics, deaf and hard of hearing workshops, coaching workshops, technology, training on hostile persons protocol, 911 data systems, organization, pharmacology, AT resources), in-service training, coursework, staff interactions, experts brought in to staff meetings, distance learning, correspondence courses and individual initiative. DBVI seeks and has been relatively successful in its collaboration with the general VR, the Region I RCEP and other organizations within the region to provide specifically relevant training around assessment, job development, vocational counseling and technology. Recent training involving some or all of the DBVI staff include low vision, National Library Services, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resources and numerous others. Other training includes attendance at regional conferences sponsored by the RCEP/TACE (blind services), CSUN (rehabilitation technology), the training grant (support staff) and various others sponsored by state, federal and non-profit partners. DBVI continues its commitment to consumer choice by bringing back information from regional events and disseminating it to consumers and other staff members, through consumer contact, by interaction with the SRC, and by discussion and idea exchange at staff meetings. DBVI staff is especially diligent about perusing pertinent journals and research and disseminating relevant articles and information via the internet, at monthly staff meetings and through in-person collaborations. The DBVI central office maintains subscriptions to several noted journals in the field (e.g., Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness).

Through attendance at combined meetings, in-service training, and direct staff contact DBVI continues to seek ways to improve and enhance collaboration with other agencies. Many DBVI trainings are in collaboration with the general Vocational Rehabilitation agency in the Department of Disabilities Aging and Independent Living (DAIL). Counselors are seeking to improve local relationships with the Department of Labor (DOL), a relationship that has not always been as productive as it should. DBVI has greatly enhanced its collaboration with other organizations to the benefit of this division. In particular, the LEAP program for summer youth employment is a model of cooperation. This involves DBVI (provider of consumers, funding), Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (infrastructure, staff), ReCycle North (jobs, staff), Linking Learning to Life (follow-up, e-mentoring), VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IL training, transition staff) and the Gibney Family Foundation (funding). This is a unique residential program providing youth with vision impairments a summer employment opportunity, a community service experience and an independent living experience in an urban setting and a new option for a wilderness setting. DBVI's director is on the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, staff members belong to local Chambers of Commerce as well as other organizations where collaboration has provided opportunities for information sharing and dissemination.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated state unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

Communication Needs: In order to communicate with individuals who may not speak English, DBVI is a part of an agency wide contract with the Refugee Resettlement Project to provide translators/interpreters in several languages commonly used in Vermont (e.g., French, Spanish, and Vietnamese). DAIL the Department in which DBVI is placed maintains information on its website on Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The LEP information provides resources and links to resources dealing with written, face-to-face and over the phone communication with individuals for whom English is not the primary language. DBVI is also able to use an agency contract for phone and written translation of almost any language in the world. DBVI makes use of an on-line contact for interpreters of ASL for those consumers who are deaf.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

Coordination of the CSPD: DBVI maintains cooperative agreements with the Department of Education, VABVI and the Department of Labor. These agreements are meant to work toward a system of comprehensive and unduplicated services for youths and adults with vision impairments in Vermont. These agreements also provide for cross training among the staffs of the various organizations. Areas covered include employment, education and disability. In this way DBVI and the other partners work to ensure that all partner programs are accessible and available to DBVI consumers. DBVI is in constant contact with the staff of VABVI who are working with a contract from the Vermont Department of Education to provide services under IDEA. DBVI also is in regular contact with the SRC board from DOE who is a Special Ed consultant, thus a wonderful resource for IDEA information.

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:12PM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009) Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

DBVI conducts a Comprehensive Statewide Assessment every three years to identify rehabilitation needs of individuals residing in Vermont who are blind or significantly visually

impaired, particularly the vocational rehabilitation (VR) service needs of individuals:

- with the most significant disabilities, including needs for supported employment;
- who are minorities and have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;
- with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce system;

-The Assessment also surveys the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs in Vermont. The most recent Assessment was conducted in FFY 2009.

Methodology

These activities were taken to complete the Assessment:

Literature Review

Consumer Satisfaction Review

Survey of Key Informants

Consumer Data Analysis

Stakeholder Input Review

Literature Review:

-Cornell Disability Statistics- Although generalized to physical disabilities, not blindness specific, it is clear that there are higher disability prevalences among certain minority populations and our outcomes show little growth in service to these groups.

-Light House International- Statistics on prevalence again indicate a higher rate of eye disease among specific populations

-Glaucoma Research foundation- Clear indication of much higher rate of glaucoma among African Americans

-Literature research done by Intern Ako Takakura on eye disease prevalence and census statistics for Vermont.

Result DBVI should be serving more minorities than are now being served according to data.

Consumer Satisfaction Review

Although still in its first year DBVI's new Consumer Satisfaction Survey (all closed consumers are contacted) is a valuable tool to keep an eye on possible service needs. Since survey is new and the sample was small, no significant trends were found.

Survey of Key Informants

Being a small Division in a small state DBVI has not developed a formal survey instrument for other providers and individuals who are knowledgeable about the needs of Vermonters who are blind and visually impaired. There is almost constant contact with the non-profits, state agencies and other significant providers. This year dialogues with the only other agency providing service to the blind, the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI), and with the Vermont Association for Business, Industry and Rehabilitation revealed perceived needs in transportation provision and in job development. DBVI intern Ako Takakura facilitated dialogues with the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Project and with the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity. These dialogues clarified perceived needs in the areas of education and outreach to minority and underserved populations.

Consumer Data Analysis

Census data was used to determine the overall profile of the Vermont population. This profile was compared to the profile of persons DBVI serves.

Stakeholder Input Review

DBVI conducted four town meetings one in each region of the state where consumers, families, providers and individuals were asked to express their thoughts on the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired in Vermont. These statements were gathered and collated and brought to staff meetings and then to an SRC meeting and finally to a combined meeting. These meetings and discussions in between resulted in a plan to take into account all the comments, need statements, data and staff and SRC input. The results were prioritized and evaluated for reasonableness, potential effectiveness and achievability and the new goals and priorities were created.

Identified Barriers to Serving Unserved and Underserved Populations

Employment Services

Services to prepare Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired to find jobs or change careers are limited.

-Mitigation

Both employers and potential employees are often uninformed and uneducated as to the potential of workers who are visually impaired. To that end DBVI seeks to create more opportunities for individuals to learn the soft skills that enhance their entrance into the job market and allow them to show their true potential at interview and in the workplace. DBVI will work with organizations like VABIR to increase soft skills training and self advocacy training. DBVI also believes that individuals who are blind or visually impaired lack opportunities to demonstrate their potential and skills to employers and the general public. DBVI will concentrate on developing OJT, job shadow, work trials and internships so that individuals will have the chance to showcase their skills with as little burden on potential employers.

Outreach and Education

Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired work against the perceived barriers caused by lack of knowledge among the public in general, and employers in specific, about the skills, abilities and ability to participate in their communities of individuals who are visually impaired.

-Mitigation

DBVI will work to increase its profile making it a greater resource for public education, while also taking part in events and projects that increase a positive public understanding of vision impairment. As stated above DBVI will seek to increase opportunities for job exploration which will also be an opportunity for employer education.

DBVI is also aware that it is not serving minorities and other underserved populations (e.g., immigrants, veterans) at a rate it should expect to according to changing census data and prevalence rates. DBVI will embark on a program of education and outreach to improve its "social marketing" with a private non-profit that specializes in minority populations. Training in this type of marketing should also enhance the skills of DBVI as it seeks to raise its profile in general.

Transportation

Access to work and training remains a barrier to Vermonters who are blind and visually impaired.

-Mitigation

This is not a new problem that DBVI has just become aware of, but one it has not placed as goal, perceiving it as a big systemic problem that agency as small as DBVI could have little effect on. Since the issue came up at all levels during the statewide assessment DBVI felt compelled to make it a priority again. DBVI will concentrate on individual and small projects, hoping they can be replicated by others or then demonstrate a workable solution for a bigger system. DBVI will also concentrate on educating consumers on resources that already exist and may be underused.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:45AM by Scott Langley

Screen 11 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009) Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

- Identify the number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services.
- Identify the number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under:
 - Part B of Title I;
 - Part B of Title VI;
 - each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- Identify the cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

Attachment 4.11 (b): Annual Estimate of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Service

Working Age Adults

Based on numbers from the 2000 census (with annual estimated updates), data from the Journal of Vision Impairment and Blindness and the American Foundation of the Blind, DBVI estimates that there are around 3,400 Vermonters of working age (18-65) who are blind or severely visually impaired. Generally DBVI serves about 10% of these individuals in a given year (389 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)07 and 335 through May in FFY09). Many of these individuals, in the 3,400 group, neither want services nor need services. They have either received sufficient services in the past, have made their own accommodations or have chosen to remain on social security benefits and not return to work. It must be remembered that many of these individuals have several other disabilities complicating their ability to seek work. DBVI does seek to find those who might need services and are not aware of the availability the services. In the past year DBVI sought ways to reach out to consumers who might benefit from DBVI services but who may not be aware of them.

Caseload Activity and Cost of Services

DBVI's numbers have, generally grown slowly but steadily, reaching a current plateau and even a slight dip past two years. FFY 2009 trends show DBVI to have slightly increasing caseload numbers. During FFY 2008 90 new referrals were received as compared to 139 in FFY 2007 and 118 in FFY 2006. The trend for FFY 2009 shows DBVI to be getting a few more referrals (85 as compared to 65 last year). 82 of these individuals were found eligible in FFY 2008 as compared to 132 in FFY 2007 and 111 in FFY 2006. In SFY 2008 DBVI spent \$567,595 from Federal 110 money and state general fund for

purchased services (budget is on state fiscal year) to serve approximately 82 newly eligible individuals and 346 total served . This means there was \$1639 spent per eligible individual. The estimate for SFY 2009 is (\$525,000) a little less, and with a few more individuals found eligible. DBVI predicts that to serve the predicted number of individuals for FFY2009 (380) and not anticipating COLA increases, it will need to have \$620,000 for purchased services in FFY 2008 (budget is based on state fiscal year). As stated elsewhere in this document DBVI is aware that, as the referral rate rises or remains steady, along with inflation increases, the funding level remains about the same. With some new revenue in sight (SSA reimbursement system has improved and ARRA funds temporarily available) DBVI has already embarked on cost watching measures, particularly in the area of technology services. At this time DBVI is confident that it can provide the same level of services for 2009 , but has concerns for 2010 and beyond, particularly with referral rates seeming to rise. With other factors being unpredictable (fuel costs, inflation) and their effect on all other costs it will be difficult to remain confident about maintaining the same level of service beyond the very short term. With federal funding continuing to be flat (outside of the very /temporary ARRA funds), creating a net loss as all other costs go up, and no increase anticipated from the state, DBVI will need to look carefully at how it spends and prioritizes its funding. In short, with SSA reimbursements growing, but not yet a dependable revenue, increased costs and anticipated growth in applicants DBVI cannot guarantee the same level of service across the board into the foreseeable future.

DBVI estimates that 6 of these consumers will be eligible for funding under the Title VI, Part B Supported Employment authority. Given the previous data DBVI is confident that it has adequate resources to meet the anticipated consumer need and inflationary increases.

| Category | Title I or Title VI Funds | Estimated Number to be Served | Average Cost of Services |
|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| | | | — |
| Totals | \$0 | 0 | — |

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:13PM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State

Supported Employment Services Program

Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -

Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010

(submitted FY 2009)

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

4.11(C)1 State's Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program

These goals and priorities were developed from the latest statewide needs assessment and were jointly developed and agreed upon by DBVI and the SRC. DBVI also took into account the latest standards and indicators (greatest area of concern is loss of successful closures) and recommendations from the last monitoring session with RSA (particularly around transition and the need to increase quality job placements while lowering Homemaker closures) .

DBVI Goals and Strategies

2009

Employment

Overall Goal--Employment

Increase the number of individuals with employment outcomes each year with earnings at or above the state average salary.

Goal 1□Employment

Increase OJT, Temp-To-Hire, Short-Term Job Shadow, Long-Term Internships

Measure

Spreadsheet to track placements with a goal of 5 per region for the year.

Strategy

1.1 Collaborate with VABIR and Job Developer Coalitions to find placements.

*Two placements per year in each region through the Coalition.

1.2 Use VABIR Toolkit and create accounts for job developers to set-up work experiences.

*Job developers will establish 2 work experiences per region using the toolkit and an account for placements.

1.3 Create DBVI standardized approach with amounts for certain work experience options.

1.3 rev: Create DBVI standardized guidelines regarding stipend practices for each work experience option.

*Amounts established.

Goal 2 □ Employment

Increase level / quality of competence in soft skills.

Measure

Track the skills obtained using the checklist.

Strategy

2.1 Develop a complete soft skills checklist.

*Comprehensive skills inventory checklist completed.

2.2 Conduct 2 DBVI groups trainings per year in the state and collaborate with VABIR using their expertise..

*Have one statewide soft skills workshop developed for blind and visually impaired.

*Participants will show improvement on the skills checklist.

2.3 Work with VABIR to provide DBVI soft skills workshop and include consumers in current VABIR workshops.

Goal 3 □ Employment

Consumers will receive the appropriate technology and technology training needed to become employed or maintain employment. Measure

Track the effectiveness of the technology assessment and the provision of technology and technology training throughout the process of case service, during case reviews, and at closure.

Strategy

Rev 3.1 Establish clear technology goals for each individual who needs technology / technology training. Create goals and skills tech sheet.

*Upon closure, consumers will also report a final time on their efforts and results toward reaching their training goals.

Rev 3.2 Develop and maintain a dynamic web resource to inform consumers of latest technology. Include □coming events□ and give an opportunity to register on website for event announcements. Create a list of additional resources.

*Visits to the DBVI website will increase each month.

Goal 4 □ Employment

Consumers will receive necessary training in order to successfully complete certification or degree programs. Measure

Track and increase the number of people who successfully complete certification and degree programs.

Strategy

4.1 Collaborate with college, vocational tech centers, and DOL to enroll and support consumers in formal training with certification.

*One person in each region will obtain certification in one of the training options.

Rev 4.2 Collaborate with college, vocational tech centers, and DOL to help them become fully accessible for the blind and visually impaired. Determine the current state of accessibility. Inform these institutions about our services.

*Provide consultation services to improve collaborative relationships with, and enhance accessibility as related to vision at, four institutions, striving to have DBVI be seen as the □go to□ expert.

Goal 5□Employment

Consumers will have increased access to transportation they need to get to work.

Measure

Track individual transportation choices to show expansion of options.

Strategy

5.1 Work with VABVI and other organizations to expand the number of volunteer drivers available in a region.

*A driver will be available for the first 30 days for each employment related request.

REVISED 5.2 Work with Ride Share and other transportation initiatives to create and promote new opportunities.

*At least one consumer in each region will use a ride share option to their job.

Outreach and Education

Overall Goal□Outreach and Education

Reduce prejudicial attitudes of employers and the general public regarding blindness and visual impairments, thereby increasing employment and training opportunities.

Goal 1□Outreach and Education

Increase employment-related opportunities by combating perceived barriers.

Measure

Track the number of new host sites for work experiences and job placements.

Strategy

1.1 Demonstrate services DBVI has to offer for employers to encourage employment opportunities for DBVI consumers (i.e., LV, Technology, O&M). Also share with Chambers, etc.

*One demonstration per Region to business, Chamber, service organization, etc.

1.2 Expand White Cane Awareness Day to educate the local community and potential employers about what DBVI clients are doing for work. Also educate the public about different eye diseases.

*One event per region with media coverage from newspaper and TV.

1.3 Present nominations for the Governor's Committee Award. Also give a certificate or letter to businesses that hire DBVI consumers. Submit kudos to GCEPD newsletter for publication.

*At least one statewide Governor's Award and at least one certificate per region.

1.4 Create public Service Announcement with high profile consumer.

*One PSA

1.5 Find intern to help with outreach.

*One media intern

1.6 All of the above strategies, and other DBVI outreach activities, will include a focus on changing attitudes and educating employers about the overall capabilities of blind and visually impaired consumers □ and people with disabilities in general □ as employees.

Goal 2□Outreach and Education

Increase DBVI□s profile

Measure

Increased referrals

Strategy

2.1 Distribute new brochure.

*Distribute 100 brochures in each region

2.2 Collaborate with the SRC to identify and participate in existing outreach events

*SRC to attend one outreach event to support DBVI outreach efforts (e.g. Health Fair, etc.).

2.3 Use website for Outreach. Promote web address on letterhead, and direct mailing.

*Increase the number of visits to our site

Goal 3□Outreach and Education

Increase communication of information about community events and learning opportunities.

Measure

Track number of communications;

Track size of audience reached per communication, as available;

Track website hits

Strategy

3.1 Create email groups to reach out to consumers about events. Ask for email and permission at application. Send a mailing asking current and previous consumers for the email address.

Create a sign up opportunity at our website.

*Obtain at least 25 email addresses from each region.

Goal 4□Outreach and Education

Improve consumer ability to self advocate.

Measure

Eight consumers trained to use appropriate accommodations in the community and workplace.

Strategy

4.1 Work with the SRC to provide a training opportunity for consumers to learn effective self advocacy skills.

*Train at least 8 consumers in one year (Two people from each region).

4.2 Work with the SRC to create short videos for the website to demonstrate appropriate self advocacy in the community and the workplace.

*Create two short videos for the website.

4.3 Work with SRC to create self-advocacy resources on DBVI website.

*Add links and videos to the website.

4.4 Create an educational opportunity for parents and students to learn about issues related to transition.

*Have one statewide transition conference.

4.5 Work with Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity or similar organization to increase DBVI's profile in minority communities.

- *Hire Vermont Partnership or similar org. to help identify minority populations
- *Create social marketing strategies with above provider

Transition

Overall Goal--Transition

All students upon graduation will have a detailed plan including all necessary steps to successfully fulfill one of the following options:

- " Attend college; or
- " Attend vocational training; or
- " Begin employment within 6-months of graduation..

Goal 1☐Transition

Increase OJT, temp-to-hire, short-term job shadowing, long term internships, and mentoring experiences for youth.

Measure

Spreadsheet to track placements. Each student has at least one work experience before high school graduation.

Strategy

1.1 Increase awareness of the LEAP program through parents, schools and counselors with a goal of increasing participation in the program.

*At least 8 participants per year.

1.2 Collaborate with VR Transition Counselors or other agency resources to increase local work experience placements.

*At least one work experience per region in collaboration with VR Transition Counselor or other resources.

Goal 2☐Transition

Students become proficient with assistive technology before graduating high school.

Measure

Use Technology Transition Checklist to show improvement.

Strategy

2.1 Adopt or create a suitable Technology Transition Checklist.

2.2 Work with VABVI teachers to encourage and explore the development of a curriculum/educational program for all students that will teach them to use technology effectively. This will increase their success in school and for securing employment. It should be a one year course that will earn the student school credit.

* One student in each region will complete the curriculum.

2.3 Collaborate with VABVI to develop more extensive assistive technology training consistent with the Technology Transition Checklist and work this training into individual IEPs.

2.4 Collaborate with schools to explore the possibility of receiving independent study credit for learning specialized assistive technology.

Goal 3☐Transition

All eligible 16 year old students will be given the opportunity to participate when it is determined that DBVI is the most appropriate agency to provide services. Measure

Spreadsheet to track all blind and visually impaired high school students including decisions about which agency will provide service.

Strategy

3.1 Collaborate with VABIR, DS Services, and VR to develop and utilize a tracking spreadsheet.

3.2 Counselors will meet with TVI□s in their region at the (beginning, middle, and end of each school year to discuss students and to establish contact and offer an opportunity to participate to all students who will be 16.

*Meetings take place in each region.

3.3 Counselors will meet with the VR Transition Counselor in their region as needed to discuss local resources and opportunities for students.

*Meetings take place in each region.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:10AM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.
- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

Justification for order of selection

Vermont DBVI does not use an order of selection

Description of Priority categories

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

Service and outcome goals and the time within which the goals will be achieved

| Priority Category | Number of individuals to | Outcome goals 26s | Outcome goals 28s | Time within which goals are to be achieved | Cost of services |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|------------------|
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|------------------|

| | be served | | | | |
|----|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:17PM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009) Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for the Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds.

DBVI realizes that it serves consumers with significant disabilities who at times require vocational support beyond the scope of DBVI's standard services. It is for this reason that DBVI maintains a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). This MOU describes how funds will be utilized and services provided in the area of supported employment. Thus consumers who may require intensive services, beyond vision impairment issues, to acquire or maintain employment can be provided with the needed support.

This MOU provides \$30,000 of Title VI, Part B funds to DVR's Supported Employment Program. In exchange DBVI is able to have consumers avail themselves of a comprehensive and established program providing statewide coverage and the expertise of supported employment providers.

Because of the multiple barriers that some DBVI consumers face, the DVR Supported Employment Coordinator helps to determine the most appropriate agency for those with multiple

disabilities. DVR may be the more appropriate agency for DBVI consumers in cases where multiple disabilities are present. This coordinator, with extensive knowledge of statewide resources, particularly in areas of psychiatric and developmental disability services, can provide technical assistance and the ability to provide to DBVI staff and consumers the best combination of resources.

In retaining \$6,000 of Title VI, Part B funds DBVI may provide short-term support services to qualified consumers. This allows the provision for a contract with a support person or job coach on the job site.

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009)

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA.)

- Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.
- Identify how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process.
- Describe how assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.
- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities.
- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.
- Identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs, if applicable.
- Describe strategies to improve the performance with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.
- Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
- Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:
 - achieve the goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
 - support innovation and expansion activities; and
 - overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of

individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

4.11(C)1 State's Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program

This document is similar to Goals and Priorities document as it was written in a way that the Goals and Priorities and the Strategies were contained in the same document. contained in this attachment are the strategies DBVI intends to use to make use of the ARRA funding.

DBVI Goals and Strategies 2009

Employment

Overall Goal--Employment

Increase the number of individuals with employment outcomes each year with earnings at or above the state average salary.

Goal 1--Employment

Increase OJT, Temp-To-Hire, Short-Term Job Shadow, Long-Term Internships

Measure

Spreadsheet to track placements with a goal of 5 per region for the year.

Strategy

1.1 Collaborate with VABIR and Job Developer Coalitions to find placements.

*Two placements per year in each region through the Coalition.

1.2 Use VABIR Toolkit and create accounts for job developers to set-up work experiences.

*Job developers will establish 2 work experiences per region using the toolkit and an account for placements.

1.3 Create DBVI standardized approach with amounts for certain work experience options.

1.3 rev: Create DBVI standardized guidelines regarding stipend practices for each work experience option.

*Amounts established.

Goal 2--Employment

Increase level / quality of competence in soft skills.

Measure

Track the skills obtained using the checklist.

Strategy

2.1 Develop a complete soft skills checklist.

*Comprehensive skills inventory checklist completed.

2.2 Conduct 2 DBVI groups trainings per year in the state and collaborate with VABIR using their expertise..

*Have one statewide soft skills workshop developed for blind and visually impaired.

*Participants will show improvement on the skills checklist.

2.3 Work with VABIR to provide DBVI soft skills workshop and include consumers in current VABIR workshops.

Goal 3--Employment

Consumers will receive the appropriate technology and technology training needed to become employed or maintain employment. Measure

Track the effectiveness of the technology assessment and the provision of technology and technology training throughout the process of case service, during case reviews, and at closure.

Strategy

Rev 3.1 Establish clear technology goals for each individual who needs technology / technology training. Create goals and skills tech sheet.

*Upon closure, consumers will also report a final time on their efforts and results toward reaching their training goals.

Rev 3.2 Develop and maintain a dynamic web resource to inform consumers of latest technology. Include □coming events□ and give an opportunity to register on website for event announcements. Create a list of additional resources.

*Visits to the DBVI website will increase each month.

Goal 4□Employment

Consumers will receive necessary training in order to successfully complete certification or degree programs. Measure

Track and increase the number of people who successfully complete certification and degree programs.

Strategy

4.1 Collaborate with college, vocational tech centers, and DOL to enroll and support consumers in formal training with certification.

*One person in each region will obtain certification in one of the training options.

Rev 4.2 Collaborate with college, vocational tech centers, and DOL to help them become fully accessible for the blind and visually impaired. Determine the current state of accessibility.

Inform these institutions about our services.

*Provide consultation services to improve collaborative relationships with, and enhance accessibility as related to vision at, four institutions, striving to have DBVI be seen as the □go to□ expert.

Goal 5□Employment

Consumers will have increased access to transportation they need to get to work.

Measure

Track individual transportation choices to show expansion of options.

Strategy

5.1 Work with VABVI and other organizations to expand the number of volunteer drivers available in a region.

*A driver will be available for the first 30 days for each employment related request.

REVISED 5.2 Work with Ride Share and other transportation initiatives to create and promote new opportunities.

*At least one consumer in each region will use a ride share option to their job.

Outreach and Education

Overall Goal □ Outreach and Education

Reduce prejudicial attitudes of employers and the general public regarding blindness and visual impairments, thereby increasing employment and training opportunities.

Goal 1 □ Outreach and Education

Increase employment-related opportunities by combatting perceived barriers.

Measure

Track the number of new host sites for work experiences and job placements.

Strategy

1.1 Demonstrate services DBVI has to offer for employers to encourage employment opportunities for DBVI consumers (i.e., LV, Technology, O&M). Also share with Chambers, etc.

*One demonstration per Region to business, Chamber, service organization, etc.

1.2 Expand White Cane Awareness Day to educate the local community and potential employers about what DBVI clients are doing for work. Also educate the public about different eye diseases.

*One event per region with media coverage from newspaper and TV.

1.3 Present nominations for the Governor's Committee Award. Also give a certificate or letter to businesses that hire DBVI consumers. Submit kudos to GCEPD newsletter for publication.

*At least one statewide Governor's Award and at least one certificate per region.

1.4 Create public Service Announcement with high profile consumer.

*One PSA

1.5 Find intern to help with outreach.

*One media intern

1.6 All of the above strategies, and other DBVI outreach activities, will include a focus on changing attitudes and educating employers about the overall capabilities of blind and visually impaired consumers □ and people with disabilities in general □ as employees.

Goal 2 □ Outreach and Education

Increase DBVI's profile, specifically among minority and underserved populations.

Measure

Increased referrals

Strategy

2.1 Distribute new brochure.

*Distribute 100 brochures in each region

2.2 Collaborate with the SRC to identify and participate in existing outreach events

*SRC to attend one outreach event to support DBVI outreach efforts (e.g. Health Fair, etc.).

2.3 Use website for Outreach. Promote web address on letterhead, and direct mailing.

*Increase the number of visits to our site

Goal 3 □ Outreach and Education

Increase communication of information about community events and learning opportunities.

Measure

Track number of communications;

Track size of audience reached per communication, as available;
Track website hits
Strategy

3.1 Create email groups to reach out to consumers about events. Ask for email and permission at application. Send a mailing asking current and previous consumers for the email address. Create a sign up opportunity at our website.

*Obtain at least 25 email addresses from each region.

Goal 4 □ Outreach and Education

Improve consumer ability to self advocate.

Measure

Eight consumers trained to use appropriate accommodations in the community and workplace.

Strategy

4.1 Work with the SRC to provide a training opportunity for consumers to learn effective self advocacy skills.

*Train at least 8 consumers in one year (Two people from each region).

4.2 Work with the SRC to create short videos for the website to demonstrate appropriate self advocacy in the community and the workplace.

*Create two short videos for the website.

4.3 Work with SRC to create self-advocacy resources on DBVI website.

*Add links and videos to the website.

4.4 Create an educational opportunity for parents and students to learn about issues related to transition.

*Have one statewide transition conference.

4.5 Work with Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity or similar organization to increase DBVI's profile in minority communities.

*Hire Vermont Partnership or similar org. to help identify minority populations

*Create social marketing strategies with above provider

Transition

Overall Goal--Transition

All students upon graduation will have a detailed plan including all necessary steps to successfully fulfill one of the following options:

- " Attend college; or
- " Attend vocational training; or
- " Begin employment within 6-months of graduation..

Goal 1☐Transition

Increase OJT, temp-to-hire, short-term job shadowing, long term internships, and mentoring experiences for youth.

Measure

Spreadsheet to track placements. Each student has at least one work experience before high school graduation.

Strategy

1.1 Increase awareness of the LEAP program through parents, schools and counselors with a goal of increasing participation in the program.

*At least 8 participants per year.

1.2 Collaborate with VR Transition Counselors or other agency resources to increase local work experience placements.

*At least one work experience per region in collaboration with VR Transition Counselor or other resources.

Goal 2☐Transition

Students become proficient with assistive technology before graduating high school.

Measure

Use Technology Transition Checklist to show improvement.

Strategy

2.1 Adopt or create a suitable Technology Transition Checklist.

2.2 Work with VABVI teachers to encourage and explore the development of a curriculum/educational program for all students that will teach them to use technology effectively. This will increase their success in school and for securing employment. It should be a one year course that will earn the student school credit.

* One student in each region will complete the curriculum.

2.3 Collaborate with VABVI to develop more extensive assistive technology training consistent with the Technology Transition Checklist and work this training into individual IEPs.

2.4 Collaborate with schools to explore the possibility of receiving independent study credit for learning specialized assistive technology.

Goal 3☐Transition

All eligible 16 year old students will be given the opportunity to participate when it is determined that DBVI is the most appropriate agency to provide services. Measure

Spreadsheet to track all blind and visually impaired high school students including decisions about which agency will provide service.

Strategy

3.1 Collaborate with VABIR, DS Services, and VR to develop and utilize a tracking spreadsheet.

3.2 Counselors will meet with TVI☐s in their region at the (beginning, middle, and end of each

school year to discuss students and to establish contact and offer an opportunity to participate to all students who will be 16.

*Meetings take place in each region.

3.3 Counselors will meet with the VR Transition Counselor in their region as needed to discuss local resources and opportunities for students.

*Meetings take place in each region.

ARRA Funding strategies.

DBVI will also use the following strategies with the additional ARRA funding available.

Process Memo for DBVI Use of Stimulus Funds for Independent Living and Older Blind Programs

In order to begin use of funds as soon as possible the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) submits the following Process Memorandum. The memorandum describes how DBVI will use and track funds available from ARRA under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

DBVI is authorized under the Rehabilitation Act to assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired to prepare for, obtain, and maintain meaningful employment and to live independently in their communities. DBVI will receive \$216 thousand in ARRA funds for use from April 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. Funds are subject to the same rules as all other funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act. However, DBVI is aware that ARRA funds are not intended for the usual day-to-day operations, and grantees are expected to find creative uses of the funds to stimulate the economy. RSA will be providing continuous technical assistance on the funds as agencies begin to make decisions about how to use the funds and how to report on what they are doing.

To be consistent with Congressional intent DBVI is planning to use all funding to support job seekers who are blind or visually impaired through employer incentives and short term training to make job seekers with disabilities more competitive in this labor market. The initiatives outlined below are clearly not "usual operations" of the DBVI program but are either expansions of recently developed smaller pilots or brand new approaches to DBVI services.

.

DBVI plans to use and track the funds as follows:

1. Alternative Placement Funds:

Use: To provide on-the-job training, work experiences, internships and other types of direct placements and to encourage employers to hire individuals who are blind or visually impaired and to provide these job seekers with options to try out and train for specific types of jobs. This includes transition age youth in designated work placement programs such as the summer LEAP program.

Tracking method: Program and account codes have been designated for the ARRA funds. DBVI will use these codes when authorizing payment for the above activities. Funds and outcomes, as for all consumer case services, and will be tracked within the VR RSA 911 database system.

DBVI CO staff will oversee alternative placement projects.

2. Projects Proposed by Local Offices:

Use: Staff in each district office will generate proposals to meet local needs to move people with disabilities to work. These will be performance based projects with specific employment outcome targets.

Tracking Method: Depending on the nature of each local project, DBVI CO staff will work with the local offices to ensure activities are appropriately coded to ARRA (grants, contracts or case services).

3. Employer Outreach and Education:

Use: Each office will develop a local outreach plan. This plan will include events to educate the business community about available employer incentives, advertisement of our services to businesses, purchase and demonstration of relevant assistive technology for employment support, participation in business events and organizations, and other employer-related outreach.

Tracking Method: All employer outreach activities will be coordinated through the DBVI CO staff. All bills will be coded to reflect ARRA funding and approved by the DBVI CO.

4. Transportation:

Use: Funds will be used for transportation expansion around the state: DBVI will explore group transportation options and alternative transportation options regionally where other commuting to work options are not available.

Tracking Method: The transportation funds will be managed by the DBVI CO staff. Funds used for transportation will be tracked through coding of authorizations for case services.

5. Supported Employment:

Use: Funds can be used to provide alternative supported employment approaches for job development and outreach to local employers to hire individuals with severe disabilities, including impaired vision.

Tracking Method: Funds will be tracked via coding of grants and contracts and/or coding of authorizations for case services. DBVI CO staff along with assistance from the DVR supported employment coordinator will oversee any funds in this area.

6. Short Term Training for Job Seekers Who are Blind or Visually Impaired:

Use: Funds will be used to support short term training in specific job skills. The training must be for six months or less in duration and must be targeted to jobs available in the local labor market or with an agreement to relocate.

Tracking Method: The DBVI CO staff will manage this activity, in consultation with DBVI field staff and advice from the DVR Employment Services coordinator, and develop a process for staff to determine which trainings are appropriate for use of ARRA funds. Field staff will authorize and code the above trainings to ARRA funds

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 11:14AM by Scott Langley

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**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired -
Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010
(submitted FY 2009)
Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of
Progress
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE)
Goals**

Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the most recently submitted version of Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

1.
 - Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
 - Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

DBVI Goals and Strategies

2008

Employment

Overall Goal--Employment

? Increase the number of individuals with employment outcomes each year.

Goal 1--Employment Measure

1. Consumers, providers, employers, and the general public will have increased awareness of DBVI services due to Outreach activities. Participants will show a positive change in awareness as measured by a DBVI event survey.

Strategy

1.1 Develop/enhance a presentation kit (Peggy has existing kit) to present to: Kit done, all offices have a kit

" VABIR, Vt. Businesses for Social Responsibility-

" Ophthalmologists-Seeking invitation to state conference.

1.2 Explore newsletter and or page in the VABVI ☐Voice☐

" Nothing new this year, will enhance effort for ht VABVI Voice this year

1.3 Family education links on DBVI website increased.- Family Education link is on website.

Progress made on enhancement of Website as Department is upgrading all sites; a specific heading for Parents/Families has been created. Site on hold as Department changes protocols to match State requirements.

1.4 Collaborate with the SRC to develop consumer driven events- Had first SRC sponsored ☐town meeting☐ consumer ☐needs☐ forum event in Springfield, four more planned 40 attended

1.5 Governor's Committee Award- In progress for FFY10

1.6 Present DBVI at DDAS meeting-not done

1.7 Distribute SILC school curriculum- SILC is retooling its curriculum distribution program

1.8 Public Service Announcement with high profile consumer- Not done, idea is strongly backed by SRC, will probably be a part of next Goals and Priorities

1.9 A new brochure has been created, waiting for Website to come on-line before distribution.

Goal 2--Employment Measure

2. DBVI will provide or facilitate new training and new pre- vocational training opportunities. DBVI will create and offer at least 2 new vocational workshops based on identified consumer needs. Participants will express a high level of satisfaction with workshop content and relevance of the topics.

Strategy

2.1 Develop protocol to determine existing pre-vocational services (e.g., VABIR, DET, VR) to enhance consumer access- done, available via intranet

Coordinate with Technology group to develop computer Access.

Set up activities to share vocational tools at staff meetings. Explore new tools and identify gaps- Ongoing

Expand work trial opportunities with private sector-VABIR working on project, tool kit available to job developers, presented to staff as resource

Develop organizational skills assessment-Ongoing

Develop resource for counselor support around consumer behavior issues. Started semi-monthly round table meetings with professional psychologist present. Continuing in FFY 2010

Self- Advocacy Skills

" explore existing curriculum-Have created curriculum for summer youth employment program, specifically around job issues, includes self-assessment form

" develop program for DBVI- Working with SRC to create a training plan.

2.8 Employment Support groups

" Self-employment - Done

" Employment groups statewide- .Montpelier ran one in FFY09 Two statewide training sessions a goal.

Goal 3--Employment Measure

3. Consumers will benefit from at least 3 new alternative workplace options. At least 3 consumers will be placed in a work from home opportunities or the new □State as a Model□ employment initiative.

Strategy

3.1 Explore job development with □High Tech□- Nothing ongoing

3.2 Explore general home work options- Are working with the General VR to create opportunities. DBVI is working to create home work with a company in Newport that has already provided site based opportunities for individuals who are visually impaired.

3.3 Meet with state Human Resources around hiring individuals with vision Impairments.- Have contacted HR director and will follow-up. No new progress

Goal 4--Employment Measure

4. DBVI staff will rewrite policies and guidelines that better explain the procedures for OJT, work trials, supported employment, and self-employment plans. DBVI staff will evaluate the usefulness of new policies and guidelines after final approval and implementation for one year.

Strategy

4.1 Set up system of guidelines and policies around Individual Development Accounts and using Micro-Business consulting services- Done.

4.2 Develop guidance and policy on job shadows, OJT, work trials, ETS service, Supported Employment.- ,Done, on intranet

4.3 Self-employment policy and guidelines.- Done.

Goal 5--Employment Measure

5. Consumers will benefit from expanded job development. There will be a consistent

increase in the number of people served and placed as a result of job development activities in the NE Kingdom and Montpelier Region.

Strategy

5.1 Find resources to fund job developer position for northeastern VT and to expand the transition coordinator position. . Job developer has been hired for the Montpelier region. Transition Coordinator position has been changed to an agreement with VocRehab VT to utilize resources of in school Transition counselors.

5.2 Explore possible new grant opportunities with VR, DET, SSA (SSA w/ Jim Pontbriand)- No progress

5.3 Research grants from AFB and others on public awareness. No progress

Transition

Overall Goal--Transition

? All students upon graduation will have a detailed plan including all necessary steps to successfully fulfill one of the following options:

" Attend college; or

" Attend vocational training; or

" Begin a high quality job within 6-months of graduation..

Goal 1--Transition Measure

1. At age 16 a decision about appropriate vocational rehabilitation services will be made for each visually impaired student. All 16-year-old visually impaired students on the transition caseload will have a transition plan.

Strategy

1.1 Develop criteria and guidelines that include:

" What services are needed?- New criteria and job specs for Transition coordinator have developed. No longer is there a single Transition coordinator, there is an agreement to utilize resources of Voc Rehab's statewide in-school Transition Counselor Team.

" How significant are the vision related services? □ ongoing

" An appropriate referral system for level □C" students.- ongoing

Develop guidelines to ensure that some form of Transition Plan exists for each DBVI eligible student (e.g. IPE, IEP, other).- done

Goal 2--Transition Measure

2. Deliver training and information to families, case managers, teachers, school teams, and administrators for issues related to the transition of DBVI eligible students. Recipients will show increased knowledge of transition services as a result of training and/or consultation as measured by a DBVI survey.

Strategy

2.1 Meet with special education administrators in each region to explain transition services.-No meetings.

2.2 Develop a long-term transition outreach strategy with VABVI.- Position no longer located at VABVI, position utilizes VocRehab's statewide in-school Transition counselor Team and works case-by-case with VABVI itinerant teachers.

2.3 Develop quarterly transition related articles that are inserted into the VABVI Voice.- Not done

2.4 Develop PSA announcements about DBVI/VABVI transition services. No progress

2.5 Rehab Associates meet with TVIs twice/year to discuss the pre-transition component

of the IL program.- Has happened twice only
Plan meeting and create necessary written materials including updates to the policy manual and a written response to our previous meeting with the TVIs.

Goal 3--Transition Measure

3. Create opportunities for students to increase their levels of independence and social skills. Participating students will evaluate their increased independence based on a survey of their DBVI sponsored experiences (e.g. IL Pilot and camp).

Strategy

3.1 Develop a plan with the Vermont Parent Information Center to create workshops for student self-advocacy, disability knowledge, and problem solving- Plan for problem solving/self advocacy has been created and is being modified for the LEAP summer program.

3.2 Develop a plan with Parent to Parent about ways to network parents. Plans are in progress for possible family event to create networking possibilities, new Website should enhance this process when finished.

3.3 Conduct a pilot project to provide IL skills training for students age 14-16. RA will serve as a broker for the services. Piloted Weekend IL apartment programs, need to find more appropriate cost effective site. LEAP summer program is providing this in depth and will continue expansion to two sessions, one in town and one wilderness.

3.4 Create opportunities for job interview practice. Use the VABIR curriculum to sponsor one event during the school year. Is being done during LEAP program.

Goal 4--Transition Measure

4. Students will have more opportunities to improve their vocational readiness for life beyond high school. At least 5 students will use the newly developed transition checklist and Choice program.

Strategy

4.1 Develop a plan with the Education Department and VABVI to promote a high level of student technology proficiency. No plan developed yet.

4.2 Develop a plan to create opportunities for students to become evaluated using the Choice program and other vocational assessments. Modified while new system of working with the VocRehab Counselors is established.

Goal 5--Transition Measure

5. Promote high expectations for student vocational goals, achievement and independence. An annual parent survey will show a high level of expectations regarding student vocational goals, achievement, and independence.

Strategy

5.1 Devote a section of each DBVI newsletter that highlights student success related to career exploration and planning. Newsletter has been dropped for now, lack of staff time for quality product.

5.2 Develop a resource list of family counseling options. List created, waiting for new Website to open under new State protocols.

5.3 Create learning opportunities for parents through NAPVI.- New NAPVI group being formed in VT.

5.4 Create a plan to increase job exploration activities for transition age students.-

Summer LEAP program

Technology

Overall Goal--Technology

? Upon closure, all consumers will have appropriate technology and training to meet the goals in their IPE.

Goal 1--Technology Measure

1. DBVI staff will rewrite policies and guidelines that better define technology services and procedures. DBVI staff will evaluate the usefulness of new policies and guidelines after final approval and implementation for one year.

Strategy

1.1 Update Maintenance Agreement including consumer responsibility for: Draft done, needs rewrite and approval.

" Virus protection

" Software upgrades

" Replacement of computer, etc.

1.2 Create policies to address. Policies written and being used but need final SRC approval.

" Who gets equipment?

" Who gets training?

" Levels of priority?

1.3 Revise IL Policy to address current technology needs. Policies await changes in homemaker policies.

Goal 2--Technology Measure

2. Consumers will receive technology services that are based on clear and measurable goals. Consumers will express, at exit interview, their clear understanding of goals, activities, and steps taken to achieve IPE goals using technology.

Strategy

1.1 Create technology Referral Form- In Process

1.2 Create technology Report Form that identifies goals, activities, and next steps. ☐ Not done

1.3 Create technology ☐ User Group. ☐ SRC initiative

1.4 Create technology brochure, in year-two, after policies are developed. Not done.

1.5 Advocate for early technology intervention for students not yet eligible for the DBVI Transition program. Being done by staff on case-by case basis.

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

See Attachment 4.11(c)(4) for DBVI's strategy on SE funding.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for the most recently completed federal fiscal year.

Standards and Indicators- Vermont met 5 of the 6 indicators in Standard 1 and met all the Primary indicators in the latest year available FY07. The Indicator not met was 1.1 that measures a numerical change in successful outcomes. As DBVI decreases its percentage of Homemakers as successful outcomes it stands to reason that its total outcomes will drop as the homemaker category shrinks so will the total as DBVI readjusts its efforts. DBVI expects the total # of outcomes to remain somewhat static, because of a slowed economy the number of placements may be hard raise, however this should be balanced by an increased effort on job placements vs. homemakers, as well as more emphasis on job development.

For just available FY08 Vermont has met 5 of the 6 indicators and 3 of 3 of the primary indicators. the only indicator not met is 1.1 Change i Employment outcomes. This comes as no surprise to DBVI as not only was this the beginning of a downturn in the economy, thus many fewer job opportunities, but DBVI is also making a concerted effort to reduce its Homemaker status outcomes. This would diminish the outcome total, but hopefully increase the financial status of each closed case as the emphasis is on satisfactory job placement, not homemaking. This predicted dip was discussed with RSA staff in 2008 as we strategized with them on how reduce Homemaker outcomes and increase the quality of outcomes in the process. Because of lowered job placements Homemakers remains high as percentage in comparison to job placements even as actual numbers are lowered. DBVI is concerned about the number of job opportunities in a shrinking economy, particularly for individuals who are blind and visually impaired and face perceived barriers at the best of times.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in the most recent completed federal fiscal year.

Strategies-Transition ☐ DBVI has changed its approach is now utilizing an agreement with Voc Rehab Vermont to work with their statewide system of in-school Transition counselors. DBVI Counselors will also work closely with VABVI itinerant teachers in the schools on case-by-case basis. While VR counselors lack in depth knowledge on vision impairment, they do bring local knowledge on school resources, key personnel, employment opportunities and community resources. The DBVI counselors and VABVI teachers will provide needed vision expertise. DBVI continues to proud of collaboration around the summer youth LEAP program, now in its third year with all new staff.

Technology-Although not fully implemented yet the new policy guidelines will allow staff to have fuller knowledge control of who has and who gets technology. The rising cost and the rising necessity for this adaptive technology is an area that DBVI must get a handle on in a time of rising costs and fewer dollars.

Employment- DBVI has found that use of employment specialist/job developers is essential to assist Counselors with heavy caseloads and consumers who are finding it difficult to find meaningful employment. To that end DBVI has hired a part-time job developer in the Montpelier/Northeast Kingdom and is considering how to enhance the job development service in the Rutland area. The Montpelier job developer has already placed several consumers in an area where opportunities are few and is now trying to expand opportunities into home work.

The above strategies outline the main areas of innovation and expansion that DBVI is supporting- the LEAP program for transitional youth and the growth of job development and the employment specialist roles in the division. DBVI has also found out about more

needs around the state through a series of "town meetings" in the various regions. Consumers and stakeholders are invited to open forums to express their views on the perceived needs of consumers of DBVI services and individuals in general who are blind and visually impaired in Vermont. These meetings will continue in combination with region community events (picnics, sailing, skiing etc.) to not only enhance community participation, but seek to question consumers on the needs of the blind and visually impaired in VT.

This screen was last updated on Jun 30 2009 9:51AM by Scott Langley

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Agency of Human Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 (submitted FY 2009) Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

Please see Attachment 4.11 (c)(4) for DBVI's report on Supported Employment services.

This screen was last updated on Jun 29 2009 2:52PM by Scott Langley

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